



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Jacksonville District

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reschedules public meetings on Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule Study (LORSS)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, has rescheduled a series of public meetings, which were delayed due to Hurricane Wilma, to gather comments concerning the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule Study (LORSS) and potential improvements to the Water Supply and Environment Schedule (WSE). The meetings are being held to gather public input on the schedule before a new plan is created.

All meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. as follows:

Monday, November 14

Lee County Commission Chambers
2120 Main Street
Ft. Myers, FL 33902

Tuesday, November 15

Okeechobee Civic Center
1750 Hwy. 98
Okeechobee, FL 34972

Thursday, November 17

Blake Library – Armstrong Room
2351 SE Monterey Road
Stuart, Florida 34996

Corps representatives will give a presentation on the study and receive public comments on the process and range of options to be considered prior to selection of new alternatives.

The Corps welcomes the public's views, comments and information about environmental and cultural resources, study objectives and important issues regarding this proposed update to the current water regulation schedule on Lake Okeechobee.

"We rescheduled the meetings as soon as we could because we know how important this is to the communities that are affected by regulations governing water levels in Lake Okeechobee. Their input is very important in this process," said Col. Robert M. Carpenter, Jacksonville District commander. "This is a critical time for the public to speak to us. The Corps is committed to finding a solution to the problems that plague Lake Okeechobee, and we are committed to hearing and understanding the full range of concerns expressed by the community."

The current WSE schedule was the preferred alternative in the LORSS Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), and was approved in July 2000 for the regulation of Lake Okeechobee. Scientific modeling efforts suggest that the regulation schedule could be improved allowing for greater flexibility in achieving optimal lake levels and optimal discharges to downstream parts of the Central and Southern Florida System.

The proposed environmental report, known as the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), will analyze reasonable alternatives to the WSE regulation schedule currently used to regulate lake levels and discharges. This study will consider only the operational changes to water management structures that discharge water from the lake as well as criteria used to determine those operations.

For further information, please call the Jacksonville District Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-2235 or visit the Lake Okeechobee link on our web site at www.saj.usace.army.mil.